

7 Ways to Test an Impression

BY RICK WARREN

“Don’t always believe everything you hear just because someone says it is a message from God; test it first to see if it really is.” 1 John 4:1 (TLB)

Jesus: *“Anyone who wants to do [God’s] will can test this teaching and know whether it’s from God or whether I’m making it up.” John 7:17 (The Message)*

1. Does It Agree With the Bible?

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.” Luke 21:33 (NIV)

“Truth stands the test of time.” Proverbs 12:19 (TLB)

“Let God’s curses fall on anyone, including myself, who preaches any other way to be saved than the one we told you about; yes, if an angel comes from heaven and preaches any other message, let him be forever cursed.” Galatians 1:8 (TLB)

2. Does It Make Me More Like Christ?

“In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:5 (NCV)

“We take every thought captive so that it is obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:5 (GW)

“But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition . . . such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic . . . the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.”

James 3:14-17 (NIV)

3. Does My Church Family Confirm It?

“God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom.” Ephesians 3:10 (NLT)

“The wisdom of the righteous can save you.” Proverbs 11:9 (GNT)

“In the multitude of counselors there is safety.” Proverbs 11:14 (KJV)

4. Is It Consistent With How God Has Shaped Me?

“We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

“God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well.” Romans 12:6 (TLB)

5. Does It Concern My Responsibility?

“Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.” Romans 14:4 (NIV)

“We shall all be judged one day, not by each other’s standards, or even our own, but by the standard of Christ . . . It is to God alone that we have to answer for our actions.” Romans 14:10, 12 (PHILLIPS)

Jesus: *“If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.”*

John 21:22 (NIV)

6. Is It Convicting Rather Than Condemning?

CONVICTION (from God)

Exposes what’s wrong:
“This needs to change”

vs.

CONDEMNATION (from Satan)

Attacks your value:
“You’re worthless”

“There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.” Romans 8:1 (NLT)

“Those whom I [dearly and tenderly] love, I rebuke and discipline [showing them their faults and instructing them]; so be enthusiastic and repent [change your inner self—your old way of thinking, your sinful behavior—seek God’s will].” Revelation 3:19 (AMP)

7. Do I Sense God’s Peace About It?

“God is not the author of confusion.” 1 Corinthians 14:33 (KJV)

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

“Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.” John 8:47 (NIV)

“Listen to this wise advice; follow it closely, for it will do you good, and you can pass it on to others.”

Proverbs 22:17 (TLB)